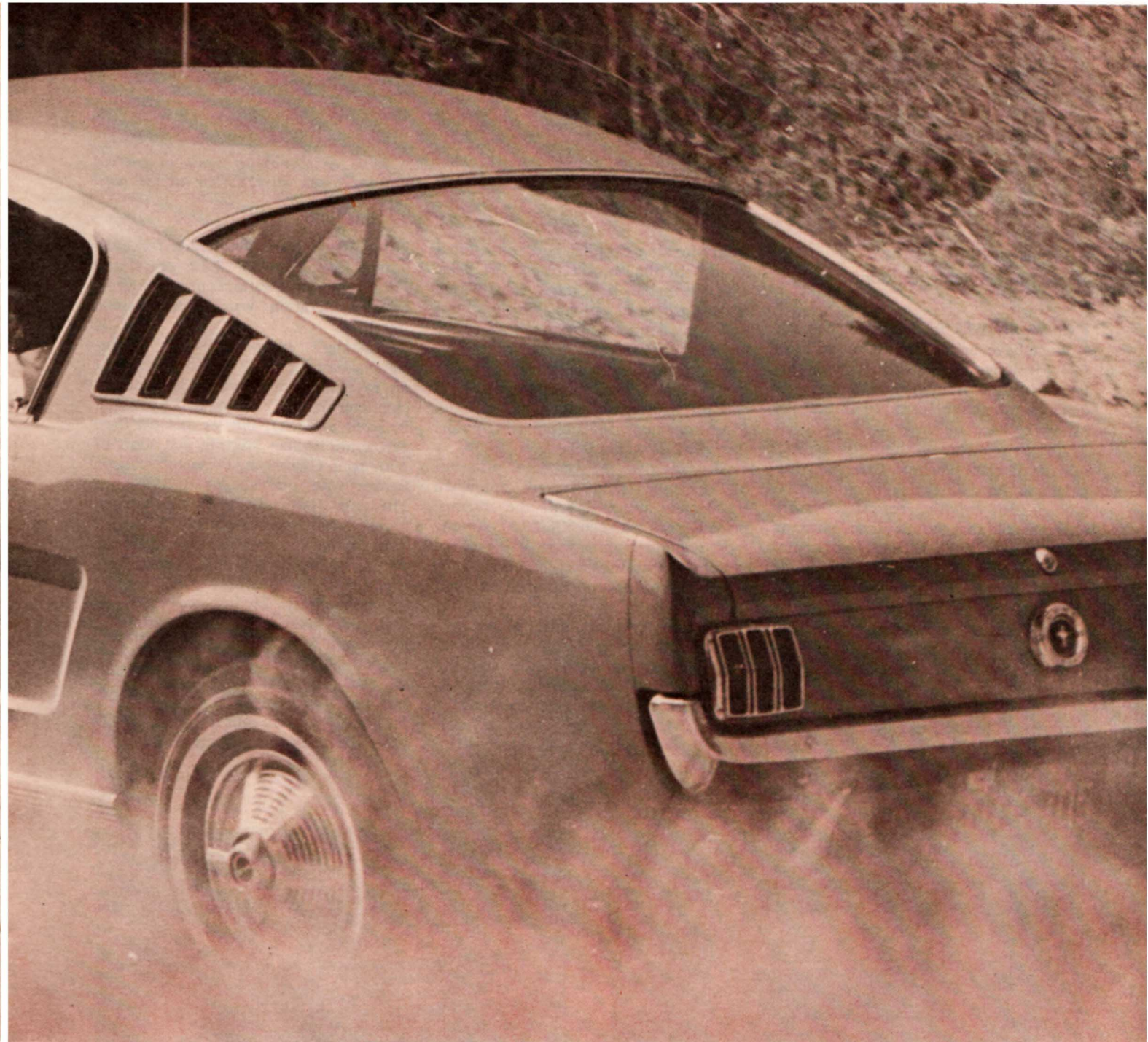
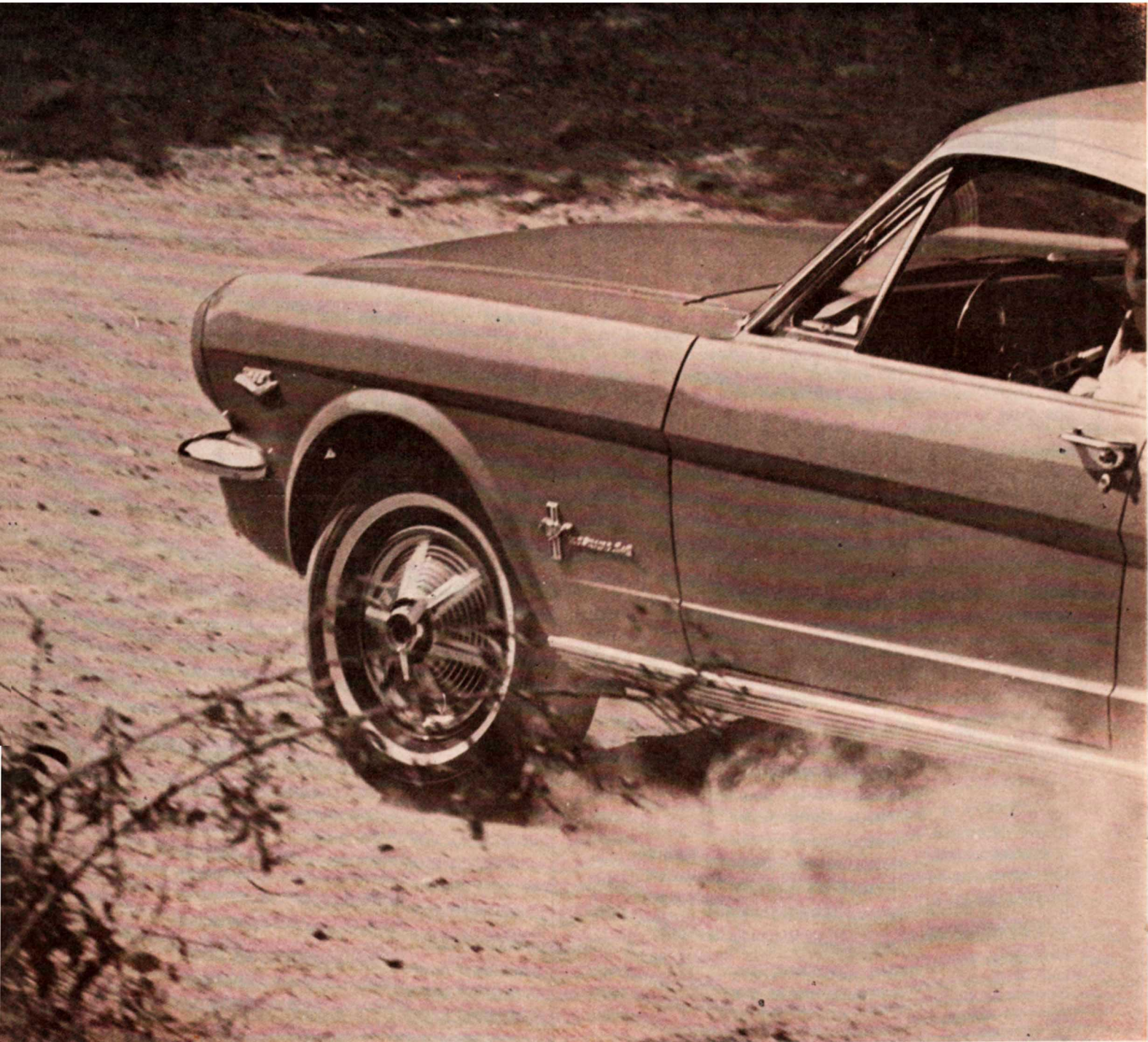


# MUSTANG 2+2 ROAD TEST



**FORD'S MUSTANG**

**STORMED OUT TO...**



# ...WRITE AN AMERICAN SUCCESS



*Our Mustang cornered flat, fast, and with a high degree of control. Body lean was slight; carb didn't flood on tight turns.*



*Mustang's side louvers serve as air-exhaust vents to get rid of stale air. Fastback design limits driver's view to the rear.*

by Bob McVay  
Assistant Technical Editor

**FORD'S ANSWER** to the youth demand must have been right, because 211,624 Mustangs have rolled off assembly lines as this is written, and dealers still can't get enough cars to meet the clamor.

August reports saw the Mustang leap into third place (behind Chevrolet Impala and Ford Galaxie) in popularity, with 32,168 of the compact, sporty chargers sold that month alone. Mustang had accounted for 3.58% of Ford's total 28.05% share of America's automobile market during the first nine months of the 1964 sales year.

What made buyers flock to dealers' showrooms, cash in hand, to buy at sticker prices? What made the car such an instant success?

Many things contributed to the car's acceptance. In the first place, the market was ready, willing, and waiting for a

sporty-looking car that had room for a family. In the second place, the price was reasonable. And third, Ford wisely offered a host of options, letting buyers build any kind of Mustang that suited their fancy — from a puffy, accessory-loaded town car to a total-performance hauler that'd give almost anything a run for its money from a traffic light. Most important, Ford offered the public just what it wanted.

Mustang's attractive base price of \$2372 swayed many buyers, but when the papers were signed, the average price tag ran between \$28-2900. Among most popular options were V-8 engines, automatic transmissions, and then 23% of all Mustangs are equipped with air conditioning.

Our test car was a pure, all-out performance Mustang aimed right smack at the man who drives hard and fast and demands the utmost in performance, with comfort a secondary consideration. With a strong 271 hp on tap in a 3000-pound car, our Mustang carried

just a shade over 10 pounds for each horse. Coupled with 3.89 gears and Ford's own close-ratio, four-speed gearbox, acceleration was fierce from a standstill.

Mustang's husky 289-inch, lightweight, cast-iron V-8 would wind right up to 6500 rpm on the Rally-Pac tachometer (a handy option at \$70.80 that includes a clock), but we got our best acceleration times shifting just short of 6000 rpm. Comparing these acceleration figures with our similar 1964½ test Mustang (basically the same equipment) found the slightly heavier 2 + 2 duplicating our former performance times within fractions of a second. Passing times (40-60 and 50-70 mph) proved quicker, because we used second gear instead of third, shifting at 6000 rpm. Riverside's back straight was partially blocked by a grandstand, so we couldn't try the fastback for absolute top speed. In our opinion, with a long enough run, our test car would easily have topped 120 mph.



*With four aboard, our Mustang charged through pylon gate with only slight amount of body lean. Added weight aided control.*



*Agile as a quarter-horse, Mustang showed its excellent control and handling qualities in tight, quick maneuvers at 40 mph.*

# STORY FROM THE VERY START.

Ford's heavy-duty suspension comes as part of the high-performance engine package. Other Mustang buyers can order this suspension option on their less powerful models for only \$31.30. It's well worth it, in our opinion, for the big extra margin it gives in safety and control. As far as our test car was concerned, it went exactly where we wanted it to. It'd corner fast with only moderate understeer. We could hang the rear end out and bring it back in at will with the throttle. Or we could take the car through a fast sweeper in a four-wheel drift with a high degree of control and safety.

On the race track or on the highway, the Mustang equipped for high performance proved a safe, controllable car for fast driving. It was a real driver's car, a great fun car, and a very safe one. This is Ford's idea of Total Performance, and we like it.

Other items that contributed to such good, precise control were the Mustang's quick (3.7-turn) steering ratio without power assist and the instant response from engine and transmission.

Our test car had Ford's 3.89 rear axle ratio, which made shifting gears completely optional — almost. Only first and fourth are needed for 90% of normal driving, so strong is the engine's low-speed torque. By slipping the clutch a little, we could even make third- or fourth-gear starts on level ground without any bucking or complaints from the engine. Fourth proved adequate for anything from chugging through traffic at 10 mph right up to and over the century mark. Using all four ratios just for the fun of it provided fierce acceleration and kept our Mustang ahead of traffic when we wanted to be ahead.

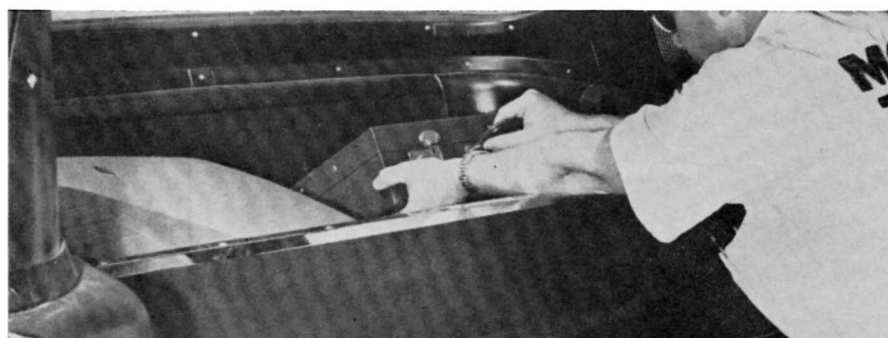
Sports car fans will love the seat-of-the-pants feel of the Mustang. Seats are firm, adjustable for rake, and they support the legs and back well while giving good lateral support. The driver sits down in the car and looks out over a hood that seems long and fairly wide. There's plenty of room for the straight-arm driving approach, and also lots of room for six-footers.

Pedals, shift lever, and wheel are in good relation to each other. The small tachometer is placed where it can be read easily and often: on the steering post's left side. Speaking of pedals, we especially liked the Mustang's accelerator pedal. It swivels vertically. No matter what position our foot was in, it was in full contact with the pedal. It's the same arrangement used on Shelby's Cobra, which uses this same engine.

Aptly named, the 2 + 2 is designed



*We had to work to lock up all four wheels during panic stops, but it was possible. Combination of discs and drums is a great improvement, always gives fast, straight stops.*



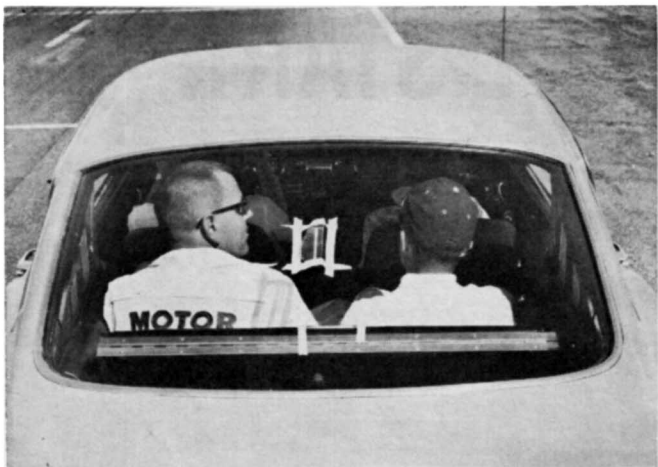
*Luggage compartment is well thought out. With panel folded halfway back, it keeps suitcases from sliding forward during braking, proved a perfect fit for companion cases.*



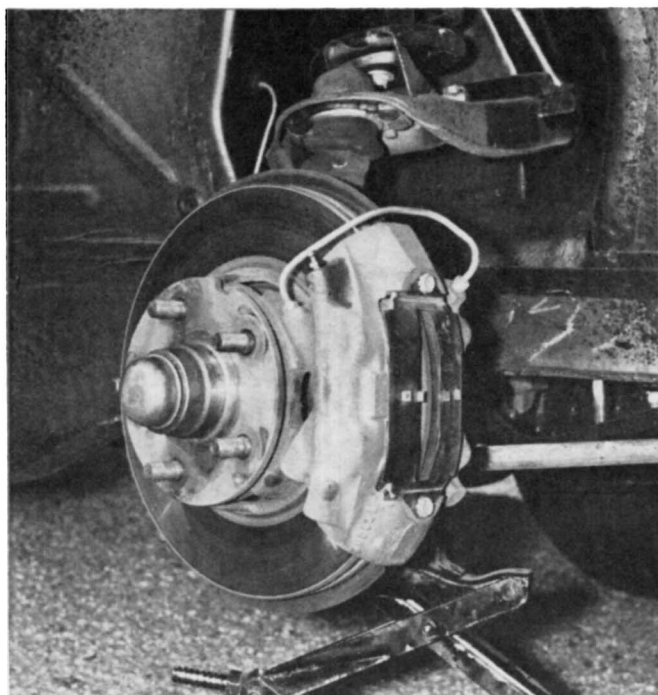
*With panel folded down, larger cases fit behind front seats, and items in trunk can be reached through trap door. Space is carpeted to protect luggage and is easy to reach.*



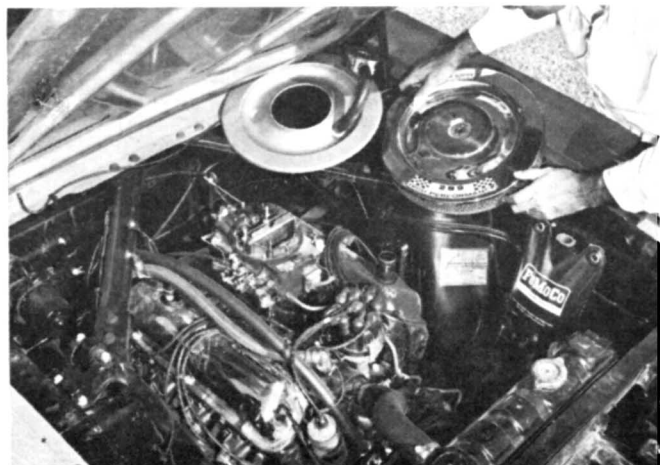
*Spare takes up most of trunk space, but there was room for attache and companion cases plus some soft luggage. Lip is high; trunk has lots of sharp edges that could cut.*



Back-seaters are directly in sun's rays. Twin thermometers registered 102° inside, showed 86° outside tinted rear glass.



The best \$58 any Mustang owner can lay out, in our opinion, buys front disc brakes and provides big extra margin of safety.



Mustang's powerhouse can be made more so with additional options like twin four-barrel carbs or even Webers, a la Cobra.

## MUSTANG 2+2

2-door, 4-passenger fastback coupe

**OPTIONS ON CAR TESTED:** 271-hp V-8, 4-speed transmission, front disc brakes, heavy-duty suspension, Rally Pac, radio, heater, console, whitewalls, seat belts, misc. access.

**BASE PRICE:** \$2589

**PRICE AS TESTED:** \$3695.50 (plus tax and license)

**ODOMETER READING AT START OF TEST:** 2251 miles

**RECOMMENDED ENGINE RED LINE:** 6500 rpm

### PERFORMANCE

#### ACCELERATION (2 aboard)

0-30 mph.....	2.9 secs.
0-45 mph.....	4.4
0-60 mph.....	7.6

#### PASSING TIMES AND DISTANCES

40-60 mph.....	4.0 secs., 293 ft.
50-70 mph.....	3.8 secs., 334 ft.

Standing start 1/4-mile 15.9 secs. and 89 mph

Speeds in gears @ 6500 rpm

1st .....	51 mph	3rd .....	94 mph
2nd .....	71 mph	4th .....	114 (observed)
			@ 6000 rpm

Speedometer Error on Test Car

Car's speedometer reading .....	31	46	52	63	73	83
Weston electric speedometer .....	30	45	50	60	70	80

Observed miles per hour per 1000 rpm in top gear .....

Stopping Distances — from 30 mph, 38.5 ft.; from 60 mph, 150.0 ft.

### SPECIFICATIONS FROM MANUFACTURER

#### Engine

Ohv V-8  
Bore: 4.00 ins.  
Stroke: 2.87 ins.  
Displacement: 289 cu. ins.  
Compression ratio: 10.5:1  
Horsepower: 271 @ 6000 rpm  
Horsepower per cubic inch: 0.95  
Torque: 312 lbs.-ft. @ 3400 rpm  
Carburetion: 1 4-bbl.  
Ignition: 12-volt coil

#### Gearbox

4-speed manual, all synchro;  
floorshift

#### Driveshaft

1-piece, open tube

#### Differential

Hypoid, semi-floating  
Standard ratio: 3.89:1

#### Suspension

Front: Independent SLA, with high-mounted coil springs, double-acting, tubular shocks, and heavy-duty anti-roll bar  
Rear: Solid axle, with semi-elliptic leaf springs and double-acting, tubular shocks

#### Steering

Recirculating ball  
Turning diameter: 38.0 ft.  
Turns lock to lock: 3.7

#### Wheels and Tires

5-lug, steel disc wheels  
6.95 x 14 tubeless, low-profile, whitewall tires

#### Brakes

Disc front; hydraulic, duo-servo, self-adjusting, cast-iron drums rear

Front: 9½-in. caliper discs, with radial rib between braking surfaces  
Rear: 10-in. dia. x 2.5 ins. wide drums

Effective lining area: 114.3 sq. ins.

Swept area: 212.0 sq. ins.

#### Body and Frame

Unitized; bolt-on front fenders  
Wheelbase: 108.0 ins.  
Track: front and rear, 56.0 ins.  
Overall length: 181.6 ins.  
Overall width: 68.0 ins.  
Overall height: 51.2 ins.  
Curb weight: 3000 lbs.





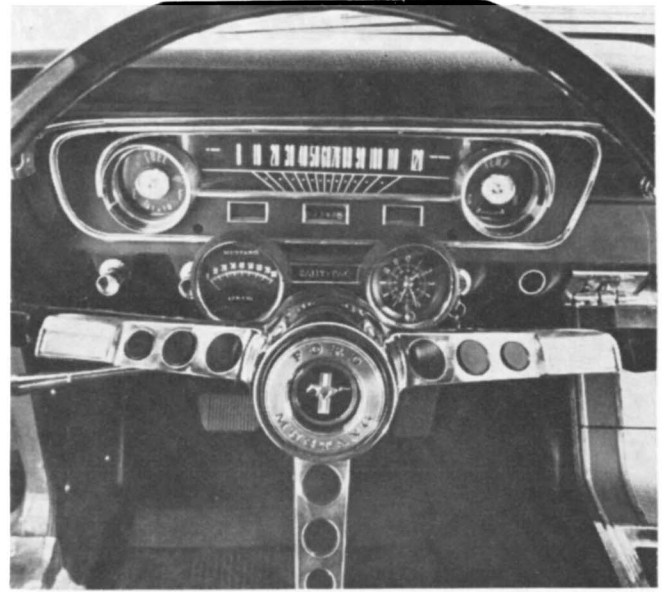


WITH MORE ROOM, OUR TEST CAR WOULD HAVE TOPPED 120 MPH EASILY. WILLING ENGINE WOULD READILY WIND TO 6500 RPM AND BEYOND.

PHOTOS BY BOB D'OLIVO, PAT BROLIER



Back seats are "occasional" ones, suitable for two people for short hauls only, but they have enough room for children.



Rally-Pac's tach and clock add to driving ease. We feel that a car with this kind of performance needs real gauges, not lights.

## MUSTANG 2+2 *continued*

for two people plus an occasional extra two passengers. We tried those rear seats and found them all right for short hops across town, but we wouldn't want to ride back there for any distance. Children should have plenty of room, but adults won't be very comfortable. With two people aboard, the rear area has more than adequate room for lots of luggage and/or sports equipment.

One drawback of the 2+2 body design is that it restricts rear vision when parking or backing out of a driveway. Also, it definitely limits the rear seat riders' view of the road ahead.

About our only big complaint with the 1964½ Mustang was its lack of adequate braking for its performance. Ford's remedied the situation this year by offering front-wheel disc brakes as an option for \$58. Again, they're well worth the money, in our opinion.

From the first stop to the last, brak-

ing was strong, progressive, and in a straight line. We used these brakes especially hard during testing, yet found they didn't fade at all. We even found them hard to lock up during panic stops — we really had to stomp on the pedal. The tape measure showed the difference. Last year's Mustang took 172 feet for a 60-mph stop — our 1965 disc-braked Mustang required only 150 feet. This could be the difference between having an accident and avoiding one. Most impressive was the way the car stopped, time after time, from high speeds, without nose dive, fade, or swerve. Adding disc brakes has brought the Mustang's stop-ability up to match its go-ability.

Naturally, with all the performance options, the Mustang costs more money, makes more noise, and rides harder than the standard version. Our test car was a no-nonsense, high-performance machine with handling, acceleration, and stopping ability as its strong points. Personally, we like it this way, but we'd order the highest axle ratio, a 3.50 unit, for fewer engine rpm at cruising

speeds and slightly better gas mileage. Our test car managed 15.5 mpg at a steady 65 mph, but normal driving brought between 13 and 14 mpg.

For all normal driving, the standard, all-synchromesh, three-speed transmission should be adequate. A 120-hp Six with three-speed synchromesh is standard equipment, but 80% of all Mustang buyers have ordered the optional V-8 engines. These are all 289-inchers in 200-, 225-, or 271-hp versions. Mustang prices start with the \$2372 hardtop plus the buyer's choice of some 70 different options.

Ford hit the jackpot when they introduced the Mustang. Adding the 2+2 fastback has given buyers a wider choice yet for 1965. Ford's high-performance Mustang won't be everyone's cup of tea, and they didn't mean it to be. But it should give the all-out performance enthusiast just what he's looking for at a price he can afford. Other buyers can order their Mustang for the boulevard or the strip. The choice is there, and it's a good one. /MT